

ICE



In Case of Emergency

ICE stands for 'In Case of Emergency'. **Add this acronym to your cell phone contacts list along with the name and number of someone who should be contacted on your behalf in case of an emergency (ICE John or ICE mom Jane).** For more than one contact, use ICE1, ICE2, etc.

The ICE concept is the brainchild of a Cambridge-based paramedic named Bob Brotchie. According to Vodofone, a UK mobile phone provider, **eight out of ten people aren't carrying information that would help if they were involved in an accident.** Storing emergency contact details in your cell phone could assist emergency personnel if you're unable to tell them whom to contact. The idea has since spread to the United States and Australia.

ICE provides valuable contact information to emergency professionals, but should be used in addition to, not in place of, other more standard forms of identification. Cell phones can be damaged; contact information could not be retrieved. Some phone users program PINs, or other blocking actions that would prevent emergency personnel from accessing contact information in the phone. **Please make sure to carry a hard copy of your emergency contact information on your person - in your wallet, purse, etc.**

- Make sure the person whose name and number you are giving has agreed to be your ICE partner.
- Make sure your ICE partner has a list of people they should contact on your behalf - including your place of work.
- Make sure your ICE person's number is one that's easy to contact, for example a home number could be useless in an emergency if the person works full time.
- Make sure your ICE partner knows about any medical conditions that could affect your emergency treatment - for example allergies or current medication.
- Make sure if you are under 18, your ICE partner is a parent or guardian authorized to make decisions on your behalf - for example if you need a life or death operation.
- Should your preferred contact be deaf, then type ICETEXT, then the name of your contact before saving the number.

Contrary to several chain e-mail warnings, ICE is not something that was actually "phase one of a phone based virus that is laying a path for propagating very quickly", or that customers would be charged for the use of this "feature". This claim has been subsequently called out as an urban legend.

The best advice: Add ICE to your cell phone only after you've affixed similar information to (or near) the official photo identification you routinely carry in your wallet.

Why?

With so many types and brands of wireless phones, it can take precious minutes to learn how to access a phone's directory. Many wireless devices are also found to be locked, damaged or have discharged batteries following an incident, rendering ICE unusable.

Please do encourage your interested friends and colleagues to make an ICE entry in their cell phone, but not at the expense of written emergency contact and medical information.